



As a steward of our nation's coastal and marine environments, NOAA addresses immediate and long-term environmental threats through its Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R). Scientists are on call around-the-clock to provide the U.S. Coast Guard and other emergency responders with critical information to help minimize environmental damage caused by oil and hazardous chemical spills. Environmental experts assess ecosystems compromised by historic or ongoing contamination and work with other organizations to conduct remediation, restoration, and monitoring of critical natural resources.

Protecting and Restoring Massachusetts' Coastal and Marine Areas

NOAA trust resources in Massachusetts include 1,500 miles of coastline and thousands of acres of sandy and rocky beaches, salt marshes, and estuarine and bay habitat that support large and active commercial and recreational fisheries. Coastal hazardous waste sites threaten natural resources and recreational uses. Active oil transportation routes contribute to the potential for oil spills in sensitive coastal habitats. The state map on the reverse page shows key response and restoration activities in the past year.

Emergency Response

On April 27, 2003, *Bouchard Barge 120* hit an obstruction in Buzzards Bay, creating a 12-foot rupture in its hull and spilling an estimated 98,000 gallons of oil. NOAA provided immediate response support through weather, tides, currents, and trajectory updates. NOAA then participated in the environmental impact assessment by providing the *Twin Otter* research vessel as a platform to train field personnel, conduct overflights, and survey roseate terns and other waterfowl. The oil affected an estimated 90 miles of shoreline, numerous bird species, and recreational use of the bay, such as shellfishing and boating. NOAA is the lead natural resource trustee coordinating damage assessment and planned restoration activities.

Assessment and Restoration

Fresh and salt water wetlands near Fairhaven were heavily contaminated by metal plating wastes such as toluene and cyanide from the Atlas Tack Superfund site, approximately 500 meters northwest of Buzzards Bay. NOAA worked with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to plan the removal of nearly 5.5 acres of disturbed wetlands and the development of new fresh and salt water marshes, allowing for enhanced public access.

Marine Debris

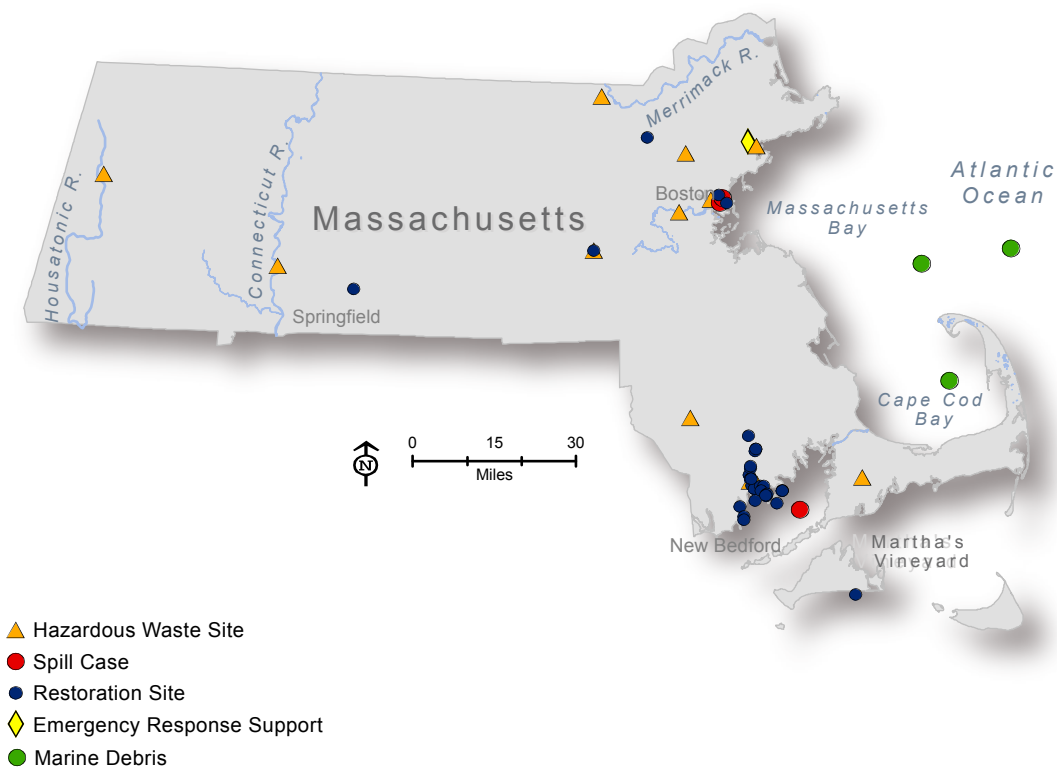
NOAA has partnered with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to remove derelict fishing gear in Atlantic right whale habitat, including Cape Cod Bay Critical Habitat. Because the area of concern is in state waters, Massachusetts provided a vessel and enforcement staff to ensure that the operations are conducted in accordance with state regulations, and has examined and disposed of the retrieved gear.

Research

NOAA collaborates with other federal, state, and local programs to develop innovative approaches to protecting marine and estuarine environments through research and synthesis of information. The Coastal Response Research Center (CRRCC) brings together the resources of a research-oriented university and the field expertise of OR&R to conduct and oversee basic and applied research, conduct outreach, and encourage strategic partnerships in spill response, assessment, and restoration.



Buzzards Bay cleanup



NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration—Protecting our Coastal Environment

**For further information about NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration,
please call (301) 713-2989 or visit our Web site at
response.restoration.noaa.gov**

